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James Earl Ray Confirms Marriage in Two or Three Weeks

PETROS, Tenn. (UPI) — James Earl Ray has confirmed he will marry a free-lance artist within the next two to three weeks at the prison where he is serving a 99-year sentence for the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"Yes, we're getting married, but we're not sure of the exact date yet," Ray told the *Knoxville Journal* in a telephone interview Thursday. "The warden has to approve the papers, and then we have to get a blood test."

Anna Sandhu, a blonde, 32-year-old courtroom artist from Knoxville, and Ray, 50, first saw each other last year at Ray's Morgan County Court hearing on charges stemming from his June 1977 breakout at Brushy Mountain Penitentiary here.

Miss Sandhu, divorced from an Indian student five years ago, disclosed Tuesday she would marry the convicted killer. She appeared on NBC's "Today Show" yesterday to discuss her plans. She could not be reached for comment today.

"I don't want to talk about the details in the papers," Ray told the newspaper. "It's just between Anna and me."

Warden Stonney Lane said this week Ray has not formally asked permission to be married.

Lane said this week that if Ray and Miss Sandhu are granted permission to marry, the ceremony will take place in Brushy's heavily guarded visitors' room where Ray has met often with government investigators assigned to probe King's 1968 slaying in Memphis.

Appeal, Memphis, Saturday, October 7, 1978

Ray Confirms He's Planning Vows

PETROS, Tenn. (AP) — James Earl Ray has confirmed what his brother and lawyer told reporters this week. He plans to marry a television courtroom artist before November.

The convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was quoted by The Knoxville Journal on Friday as saying his wedding with Anna Sandhu, 32, of Knoxville, will be held inside Brushy Mountain State Prison in the next two or three weeks.

"Yes, we're getting married, but we're not sure of the exact date yet," Ray said. "I don't want to talk about the details in the papers. It's just between Anna and me."

Ray and Mrs. Sandhu, who was divorced five years ago after a three-year marriage, met a year ago when Ray was on trial for his June, 1977, escape from the East Tennessee maximum-security prison. Ray, 50, has never been married.

He told the Journal that he and his fiancee have to get blood tests and the prison warden, Stonney Lane, has to approve the papers.

Lane said Friday that Ray has not taken any of the necessary steps for the wedding.

"I've never talked to him about getting married," the warden said. "I asked him once in a joking manner if he was in love and he said, 'Yeah, we are, kinda,' I didn't think he was serious."

Ray has been claiming for more than nine years that he was coerced into his 1969 confession to King's murder and that he did not kill the civil rights leader. Mrs. Sandhu has said she also does not believe that Ray killed King.